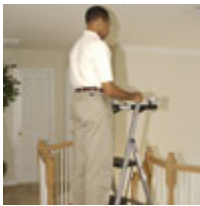


Ladder Safety Tips

According to the Home Safety Council's State of Home Safety in America™ (2002), nearly 150,000 people were treated for home ladder injuries in U.S. emergency departments in 2000. Whether you're spring cleaning, hanging decorations or painting, the same basic ladder safety rules apply:



- Before using a ladder outdoors, choose a location that is well away from all power lines. Coming in contact with live wires can be fatal.
- Place the ladder on level ground and open it completely, making sure all locks are engaged.



- Use the 4-to-1 rule for extension ladders: for each 4 feet of distance between the ground and the upper point of contact (such as the wall or roof), move the base of the ladder out 1 foot.
- Always face the ladder when climbing and wear slip-resistant shoes, such as those with rubber soles.



- Keep your body centered on the ladder and gauge your safety by your belt buckle. If your buckle passes beyond the ladder rail, you are overreaching and at risk for falling.



- Make sure rungs are dry before using the ladder.
- Stand at or below the highest safe standing level on a ladder. For a stepladder, the safe standing level is the second rung from the top, and for an extension ladder, it's the fourth rung from the top.